



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

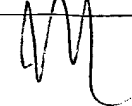
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/678,905	10/03/2003	Justin H. Doh	7784-000657	1415
27572	7590	09/21/2004	EXAMINER	
HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.			FUQUA, SHAWNTINA T	
P.O. BOX 828			ART UNIT	
BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MI 48303			PAPER NUMBER	

3742

DATE MAILED: 09/21/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/678,905	Applicant(s) DOH ET AL. 	
	Examiner Shawntina T. Fuqua	Art Unit 3742	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 October 2003.
 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/20/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

2. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it contains more than 150 words.

Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 1-2, 15, and 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

5. Claims 2 and 22 recites the limitation "said microwave" in lines 2 and 3 thereof. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 1, 4, 6-7, 9-12, 15-16, 18-21, 23-25, 27, 29-31, 33-34, and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kovacs (US5816496).

Kovacs discloses a humidification system comprising an apparatus/method with a vessel (3) for containing water, an oven (H1, 4) for vessel and heating water to a temperature to remove micro-organisms and to generate steam (13, 4, 2; column 3, lines 26-40; Figures 2, 3, 5), a vapor outlet (24), a water drain line (43) with a valve (42), a water supply conduit (38) with a valve (18) and wherein a controller (50) controls valve, a humidity sensor (1a), a vapor injection nozzle (6, 7c) with a plurality of vanes (column 5, lines 8-12), a water overflow conduit (19), an airflow conduit (7), a controller (10) for turning on/off oven, and a water level sensor (49, 50; column 4, lines 47-54).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 3742

9. Claims 2-3, 5, 13-14, 17, 26, and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kovacs as applied to claims 1, 4, and 15 above in paragraph 7, and further in view of Izzo (US6064047).

Kovacs discloses all of the recited subject matter except a microwave heating source, a vacuum accumulator, and pressure relief valve. Izzo discloses a microwave heating source, a vacuum accumulator, and a pressure relief valve (abstract). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have replaced the gas heater of Kovacs with the microwave heater of Izzo and to have included the vacuum accumulator, and pressure relief valve of Izzo in the apparatus/method of Kovacs because, a microwave heater allows the water to be heated more efficiently, a vacuum accumulator allows the steam to be moved more efficiently, and a pressure relief valve prevents a pressure buildup which could damage components.

10. Claims 8, 22, 32, 35, and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kovacs as applied to claim 1, 15, and 20-21 above in paragraph 7, and further in view of Ellsworth (US5699983).

Kovacs discloses all of the recited subject matter except a controller for controlling the drain valve so that water is only drained after being heated. Ellsworth discloses a controller for controlling the drain valve so that water is only drained after being heated (column 5, lines 9-17, 41-56). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included the controller which controls the drain valve of Ellsworth in the apparatus/method of Kovacs because, a controller which controls the drain valve allows dissolved solids to be drained.

Art Unit: 3742

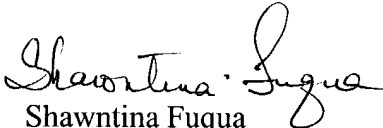
Conclusion

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shawntina T. Fuqua whose telephone number is (703) 305-2581. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8-4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robin Evans can be reached on (703) 305-5766. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

stf
September 14, 2004


Shawntina Fuqua
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3742